

### **REMARKS**

Currently claims 1-24 are pending in the above-identified application. By this Amendment, claims 1-5, 7-13 and 16-24 are amended, the Specification is amended, and Figures 1 and 15 are corrected. Claims 6, 14 and 15 are cancelled and no new claims have been added.

Pursuant to the above amendments and following remarks, Applicants respectfully request the reconsideration of the outstanding rejections for the pending claims.

#### **I The Specification is Amended**

Applicants amend the specification to add reference numerals to the description of the eight dampers. The dampers are described throughout the specification, and the addition of reference numerals is not new matter. Replacement Figures 1 and 15 are provided to illustrate the reference numerals for the dampers.

#### **II. Interview March 23, 2009**

Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative during the March 23, 2009 telephonic interview. The interview was initiated by Applicants' representative who discovered an error in the Office Action relating to the rejection of claim 13. During the interview the Examiner and Applicants' representative reviewed all the bases by which the claimed are rejected, and allowed the Examiner to change his basis to reject claim 13. The substance of the interview is incorporated into this reply.

#### **III. Objections to the Drawings**

The Examiner has objected to the drawings for allegedly not showing certain features recited in claims 1 and 6. This objection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner has specifically objected to the drawings for allegedly not showing the features of a switching mechanism recited in claim 1 and 6. However, Applicants respectfully assert that element 64 is clearly shown within the drawings, for example, Figure 1, which operates to switch or reverse the distribution route for air and a refrigerant.

Further support for this feature can be found within the Specification as originally filed at pages 3 and 4 within paragraphs 11 and 12. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the objection to the drawings based upon a feature of claims 1 and 6 not being clearly shown.

IV. Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to claim 19 based upon descriptive informalities.

Applicants have corrected the descriptive informalities to obviate the objection directed to the recitation of “approximately the same plane” to more appropriately recite the same plane. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully assert that the corrected recitation obviates the objection and accordingly ask for the withdrawal of the objection to claim 19.

IV. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

The Examiner rejects claims 8-12 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention.

More specifically, the Examiner has objected to language which recites a thickness direction within claims 8-12, which is allegedly unclear and does not define a specific direction, which allegedly render the claims indefinite.

To obviate the rejection, Applicants have amended the language found within claims 8-12 to recite “the casing is shaped like a flattened box” to refer to a direction parallel to the shortest side of the casing, and respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of claims 8-12.

V. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102 and § 103

The Examiner rejects claims 1, 6, 8 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Japanese Publication No. 2003-314856 to Harushige (hereinafter “Harushige”); and rejects claims 2, 4, 5, 7, 14 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harushige; and rejects claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harushige in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,042,271 to Manz (hereinafter “Manz”). Also, the Examiner rejects claims 10-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harushige in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,805,542 to Hosoda et al. (hereinafter “Hosoda”); and rejects claims 16-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harushige in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,644,059 to Maeda et al. (hereinafter “Maeda”). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

With regards to independent claim 1, rejected over Harushige under § 102(b), Applicants claim,

A humidity control system for supplying either one of a dehumidified first air stream and a humidified second air stream to an indoor space and for discharging the other air stream to an outdoor space, the humidity control system comprising:

- a refrigerant circuit which includes a first and a second adsorbent-supported heat exchangers which are fluidly connected in the refrigerant circuit to perform a refrigeration cycle, and which is capable of reversing the circulation direction of a refrigerant;

- a box-shaped casing internally having an air passageway in which the heat exchangers are disposed;

- an air supplying fan and an air exhausting fan which are disposed in the casing; and

- a switching mechanism for changing the distribution route of air in the casing depending on the circulation direction of the refrigerant in the refrigerant circuit so that a first air stream is passed through one of the heat exchangers that is functioning as an evaporator while a second air stream is passed through the other heat exchanger that is functioning as a condenser;

- the casing has an internal space which is divided into a first space defined along a fan side lateral plate as a lateral plate of the casing, and a remaining second space;

- the air supplying fan and the air exhausting fan are disposed in the first space and the first and second heat exchangers and the switching mechanism are disposed in the second space; and

- a compressor and a reversal mechanism for reversing the circulation direction of refrigerant in the refrigerant circuit are disposed between the air supplying fan and the air exhausting fan in the first space of the casing.

Applicants respectfully assert that Harushige fails to anticipate Applicants' claimed invention, for at least the basis that Harushige does not teach or suggest "a reversal mechanism for reversing the circulation direction of refrigerant in the refrigerant circuit are disposed between the air supplying fan and the air exhausting fan in the first space of the casing", as claimed in independent claim 1.

Although, the Examiner has argued that Harushige's four-way switching valve (73) anticipates Applicants' "reversal mechanism", Applicants respectfully assert that the recited reversal mechanism, its function and location, as underlined above, is not anticipated by Harushige.

That is to say that Harushige does not teach or suggest each and every element contained within Applicants' claimed invention, for example, independent claim 1.

Harushige's four-way switching valve 73, is simply a valve, and does not anticipate an explicit reversal of a refrigerant flow through a refrigerant circuit, where the portion of the refrigerant circuit is also disposed between air supplying fan and the air exhausting fan.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully assert that independent claim 1, for at least the basis above, is patentably distinct from Harushige under § 102(b).

Claims 6, 8 and 9, are similarly patentably distinct over Harushige for at least the basis recited above since these claims depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 1, as well as the additional features contained therein.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 6, 8 and 9 under § 102(b).

With regards to claims 2, 4, 5, 7, 14 and 15 which are rejected under § 103 over Harushige, Applicants respectfully assert that Harushige fails to render these claims obvious at least based on the deficiencies discussed above with respect to independent claim 1.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of claims 2, 4, 5, 7, 14 and 15, for at least the same basis asserted above with respect to independent claim 1.

In addition, since the Examiner has applied a single reference § 103 rejection, the Examiner is respectfully requested to produce a secondary reference or other written evidence if this rejection is maintained.

With regards to claim 3, which is rejected under § 103, over Harushige in view of Manz, Applicants respectfully assert that Manz fails to provide what is lacking with regards to Harushige individually, and therefore, the asserted combination fails to render the instant claimed invention obvious, for at least the same basis with regards to independent claim 1 not being anticipated individually by Harushige.

Manz is applied by the Examiner to disclose "the compressor being disposed in the internal air passageway of the casing." However, even if Manz is relied upon for this purpose, Manz only shows a refrigerant handling system with a manifold connected high pressure and low pressure refrigeration system. See, column 3, lines 15-20. Manz fails to provide "a reversal mechanism for reversing the circulation direction of refrigerant in the refrigerant circuit are

disposed between the air supplying fan and the air exhausting fan in the first space of the casing.”

Therefore claim 3 is not rendered obvious by the combination of Harushige in view of Manz.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of claim 3 under § 103(a) under the combination of Harushige in view of Manz.

With regards to claims 10-13, which are rejected under § 103, over Harushige in view of Hosoda, Applicants respectfully assert that Hosoda fails to provide what is lacking with regards to Harushige individually, and therefore the asserted combination fails to render the instant claimed invention obvious, for at least the same basis with regards to claim 1 not being anticipated by Harushige.

Hosoda is applied by the Examiner to disclose “that fans are multi-blade fans or that they are disposed such that the center axle of the impeller is oriented [at] a horizontal direction of the casing.” However, even if Hosoda is relied upon for this purpose, Hosoda only shows an air conditioning apparatus, with a centrifugal blower in lieu of the axial blower to operate at a lower noise threshold. In addition, Hosoda requires a special spiral casing for the centrifugal blower, a casing that is separate from the other apparatus. See, column 1, lines 34-40 and 43-47. Hosoda fails to provide “a reversal mechanism for reversing the circulation direction of refrigerant in the refrigerant circuit are disposed between the air supplying fan and the air exhausting fan in the first space of the casing.”

Therefore claims 10-13 are not rendered obvious by the combination of Harushige in view of Hosoda.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of claims 10-13 under § 103(a) over the combination of Harushige in view of Hosoda.

With regards to claims 16-24, which are rejected under § 103, over Harushige in view of Maeda, Applicants respectfully assert that Maeda fails to provide what is lacking with regards to Harushige individually, and therefore the asserted combination fails to render the instant claimed invention obvious, for at least the same basis with regards to claim 1 not being anticipated by Harushige.

Maeda is applied by the Examiner to disclose “a humidification control apparatus having a filter arranged and formed upstream of an air flow in front of (i.e. along the outdoor filter) of a condenser.” However, even if Maeda is relied upon for this purpose, Maeda only shows a filter 502 which regeneration air B passes through along a path to the lower half of a desiccant wheel 103. See, column 11, lines 52-58. Maeda fails to provide “a reversal mechanism for reversing the circulation direction of refrigerant in the refrigerant circuit are disposed between the air supplying fan and the air exhausting fan in the first space of the casing.”

Therefore claims 16-24, are not rendered obvious by the combination of Harushige in view of Maeda.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of claims 16-24 under § 103(a) over the combination of Harushige in view of Maeda.

VI. Conclusion

In view of the above amendment, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact William D. Titcomb Reg. No. 46,463 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

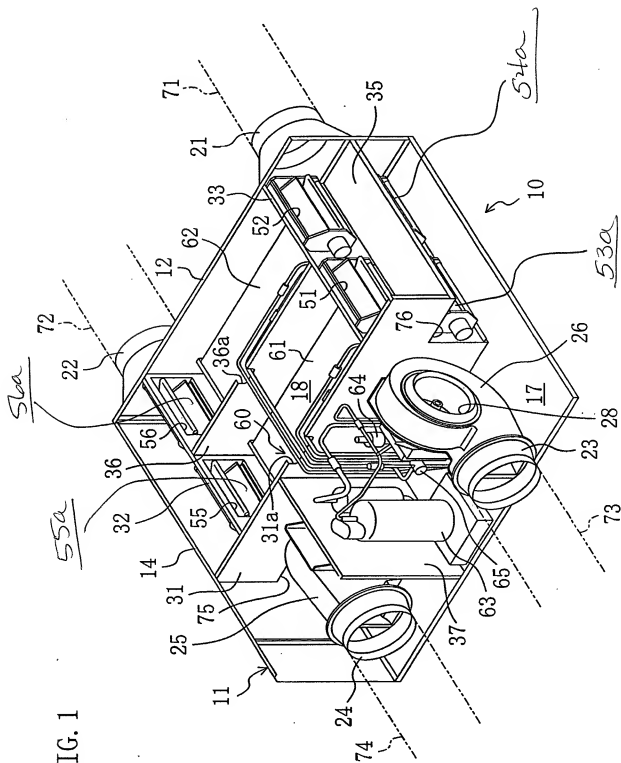
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Respectfully submitted,

  
By \_\_\_\_\_

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FIG. 15

